



School Based Nutrition and Child Hunger Relief Programs: School Breakfast and Summer Food Service Outreach

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15, section 1G (f), and Chapter 68 of the Acts of 2011, line item 7053-1925

June 2014

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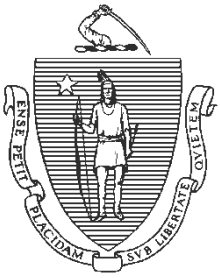
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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

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Dear Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit the *School Based Nutrition and Child Hunger Relief Programs School Breakfast and Summer Food Service Outreach Report* pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) Chapter 15, section 1G (f), and Chapter 68 of the Acts of 2011, line item 7053 – 1925.

This report reflects the School Breakfast Programs from school year 2011-12 and Summer Food Service Programs in Fiscal Year 2013. Throughout the period, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) addressed the benefits of the school breakfast and summer food service programs as nutritional supports for families in the Commonwealth. Under the direction of the Office for Nutrition, Health and Safety Programs, the child nutrition outreach program coordinators at Project Bread worked together with school district staff and community organizations to expand and improve current programs, and implement new campaigns and resources to address childhood hunger in Massachusetts.

Continued monitoring of economic trends and meal benefit eligibility levels provided the opportunity to forecast need in all cities and towns. The difficult economic status in many communities challenged program sponsorship. Collaborative activities with coordination of resources, however, sustained program participation.

During the 2011-2012 school year, the tenth year of the Universal School Breakfast Program, the Department provided funding for the Universal School Breakfast Program to 48 school districts, offering a nutritious breakfast to more than 122,146 Massachusetts children in 272 schools. These funds were used to provide breakfast to all children in schools with a high percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price school meals. The schools developed partnerships among administrators, food service personnel, and other school staff to offer breakfast as a regular part of the school day. School administrators and teachers commented that since the inclusion of breakfast, student achievement increased, students made fewer visits to the nurse, and absenteeism declined.

School breakfast brochures were translated to include Chinese, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese and updated resource materials for community agencies, food service directors, and schools. Breakfast materials were offered to community agencies, food service directors, principals, and homeless liaisons throughout the Commonwealth to promote the benefits of starting the school day with a nutritious breakfast.

Outreach staff continued to work with food service directors and schools to promote serving breakfast as part of the school day. Overall 1,629 schools¹ offered a breakfast program to students using various models ranging from universally free for all students in the school to others which included reduced price, and charging for the purchase of breakfast.

For summer programs, the key to success was the link to community-based activities and the comprehensive operation of the summer sites. Additional federal reimbursement dollars were made available through streamlined program reimbursement. Massachusetts received an increase in federal reimbursement from \$6,616,258 for Fiscal Year 2011 to \$7,054,703 in Fiscal Year 2012. Increased marketing, food presentation and acceptability, locally grown produce, and enhanced nutrient standards, improved the overall food service operations and encouraged sustained participation. Nutrition education was also integrated into the summer day for many programs.

Providing grant funds to hire outreach coordinators for local programs resulted in an increase in the number of sites, targeted marketing campaigns, and expanded community involvement in the Summer Food Service Program. The availability of additional grant opportunities from various entities for these programs allowed for the development of effective strategies to improve nutrition programs, outreach, and accessibility in urban and rural locations. The Commonwealth's support of these programs contributed greatly to the ability to reach and serve hungry children across the Commonwealth in the strained economic climate.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

¹ Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Nutrition, Health & Safety Programs, 2012

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Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature: *School Based Nutrition and Child Hunger Relief Programs: School Breakfast and Summer Food Service Outreach* pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 68 of the Acts of 2011, line item 7053-1925, which reads in part:

For the school breakfast program for public and nonpublic schools and for grants to improve summer food programs during the summer school vacation period; provided, that funds shall be expended for the summer food service outreach program and the school breakfast outreach program; provided further, that within the summer food program, priority shall be given to extending such programs for the full summer vacation period and promoting increased participation in such programs...; provided further, that funds shall be expended for the universal school breakfast program in which all children in schools receiving funds under the program shall be provided free, nutritious breakfasts at no cost to them; provided further, that subject to regulations of the board that specify time and learning standards, breakfasts shall be served during regular school hours; provided further, that participation shall be limited to those elementary schools mandated to serve breakfast under section 1C of chapter 69 of the General Laws where 60 percent or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the federally-funded school meals program; provided further, that the department shall select school sites for programs authorized by this item not later than November 16, 2011, and shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means on the preliminary results of these grants...

And M.G.L. Chapter 15, section 1G (f):

The commissioner shall submit a report to the clerk of the House of Representatives who shall forward the same to the joint committee on education, arts and humanities on or before December thirty-first, nineteen hundred-four and on December thirty-first of each year thereafter. The report shall include, but not be limited to: the percentage of eligible children participating in school breakfast programs statewide during the previous school year; the amount of additional federal dollars brought into the state by all school breakfast and summer food service outreach activities; the number of additional school breakfast and summer food service programs started in the preceding year; and the increase in participation in summer food service and school breakfast program.

Part I: Development, Goal, and Objectives of Outreach Program

An Act establishing school-based Nutrition and Child Hunger Relief Programs was signed into law on January 14, 1993. This law, Chapter 414, Acts of 1992, directed the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) to establish a School Breakfast and a Summer Food Service Outreach Program. Its overall goal is to increase participation in both programs, with the stated emphasis on increasing the participation of needy children. The Department, in keeping with the mandate, established the following objectives:

1. Improved marketing strategies to increase participation in the School Breakfast and Summer Food Service Outreach Activities.
2. Promoted the program as a valuable resource for all children, families, schools, and communities, including homeless and migrant families.
3. Increased the number of children who participated in the State Universal School Breakfast Program (SUSBP) by promoting breakfast during the school day.
4. Worked with meal providers to offer more nutritious and appetizing meals.
5. Recognized individuals who had been instrumental in the progress that was made, including food service directors and administrators.
6. Assisted school districts and appropriate organizations in sponsoring and expanding the programs.
7. Increased the involvement of superintendents, principals, and other local administrative and advocate groups in promoting and supporting school breakfast as an essential part of the school day, and the Summer Food Service Program Outreach as a community resource.
8. Developed creative strategies to remove barriers to program participation.
9. Reviewed and improved current outreach materials, incorporating the use of technology.
10. Ensured that all activities and efforts were culturally sensitive to linguistic minorities.

The Department continued its contractual relationship with Project Bread – The Walk for Hunger, Inc., to assist in conducting its outreach efforts for 2011 through 2012.

Part II: School Breakfast Program Outreach Activities and Outcomes

During the 2011-2012 school year, the tenth year of the State Universal School Breakfast Program (SUSBP), the Department provided funding for the SUSBP to 48 school districts that were composed of 272 schools in which there were 122,146 participating children, as Table 1 (below) indicates. There was an 11.6 percent increase in the number of school districts that participated in the SUSBP. This increase was accompanied by a 1.1 percent increase in the number of SUSBP schools and a 1.8 percent increase in the number of participating children. This suggests that our outreach efforts had a positive impact.

In order to qualify for the state program, the meals site must be an elementary school which had 60 percent or more of student enrollment eligible for free and reduced price meal applications the previous year, plus over 40 percent free and reduced price meals served two years prior.

Table 1: Funding of State Universal School Breakfast Program (SUSBP) By Districts, Schools, and Children FY11 and FY12²

	FY 2010-2011	FY 2011-2012	Percentage Change +/-
State Funding	\$2,011,060	\$2,011,060	0
Number of Participating Districts	43	48	11.6%
Number of SUSBP Participating Schools	269	272	1.1%
Number of SUSBP Participating Children	119,991	122,146	1.8%

Massachusetts school districts received an increase of federal severe need reimbursement from \$33.5 million in FY11 to \$36.4 million in FY12. Regular Federal breakfast program reimbursements increased from \$36.8 million in FY11 to \$39.8 million in FY12³.

The federal severe need reimbursement program was designed to provide breakfasts to students enrolled in schools that demonstrate extraordinary need as determined by federal poverty guidelines. The rules stipulate that the school site must demonstrate at least 40 percent of its students served meals were eligible for free or reduced price meals two years prior. The regular reimbursement program requires that students are eligible for free or reduced meals without regard to a certain percentage of students who are eligible for prior years. It also provides certain incentives that are related to conditions that favor schools serving more eligible students.

Although these three programs serve eligible students, they complement one another as they are oriented toward varying aspects of the eligible population as a whole. The state universal program, for example, is restricted by legislation to elementary school students.

The schools developed partnerships among administrators, food service personnel, and other school staff to offer breakfast as a regular part of the school day. School administrators and teachers continued to comment that with breakfast as a priority of the school day, student achievement increased, fewer visits to the nurse occurred, and absenteeism declined.

To ensure that all students start the day ready to learn, the Department remains confident that the most efficient and effective way to take full advantage of breakfast participation in the SUSBP is

^{2,3} Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Nutrition, Health & Safety Programs, 2012

to offer breakfast in the classroom. The Office for Nutrition, Health and Safety Programs outreach staff provided technical assistance to school districts to promote the breakfast program and its benefits through various resources including breakfast coordinators, promotions, outreach letters, flyers, and social media.

Table 2 below, indicates that there was steady, although relatively small, increases in the percentage of children eligible for free or reduced price meals who have participated in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) between FY08 and FY11. Due to the Federal Nutrition Meal Pattern changes, there was a 1.6 percent decrease in breakfast participation in FY12. However, the Department continued to explore new outreach strategies to improve participation. Free meal eligibility is at 130 percent of the federal poverty guideline while reduced price eligibility is above 130 percent but limited to 185 percent of the federal poverty guideline.

Table 2: Percent of Eligible Children Statewide Participating in School Breakfasts from FY 08 to FY12⁴

Fiscal Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Percent	42.7	46	48	48	46.4

It continued to be challenging to address increased overall food costs and manage expenses to support high nutrient dense foods. Districts were assisted in calculating and managing program costs with the availability of the breakfast cost calculator and financial fact sheets for the School Breakfast Program located on the outreach website, www.meals4kids.org.

Implementation of Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act

During the 2011-2012 school year, the Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP) staff developed and disseminated information to local education agencies about the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to implement Section 112 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, in which state agencies are required to help school food authorities outreach to families. The Department also sent out an e-alert to 1,504 contacts statewide, including all school districts, principals, and School Nutrition Directors (SNDs) to notify them of the new law and make available the necessary resources to conduct this outreach.

Breakfast may be offered to any school that requests it, and was available in many school districts that were not high need. Public schools are required to provide breakfast if at least 40 percent of students qualify for free or reduced price lunch and those schools received state support for their breakfast programs. The Department also provided a subsidy, above the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regular reimbursement, to schools where 60 percent or more of the students qualified for free or reduced price lunch. In the 2011-2012 school year, school breakfast promotion outreach strategies were provided through the Fresh Focus eNewsletter that was sent to 1,941 contacts. Additionally, school breakfast outreach ideas were also sent through the School Meal Application (SMA) Campaign to principals and SNDs in 68 communities, where the free and reduced price meals eligible students exceeded 50 percent of

⁴ Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Nutrition, Health, and Safety Programs, 2012

the student enrollment or was state universal breakfast eligible, indicating that greater than 60 percent of children are receiving free or reduced price meals in an elementary school.

In school year 2011-2012, the Department upgraded to a statewide direct certification data exchange process. Instead of periodic data exchanges with the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) the new upgrade enabled nutrition directors in pilot communities to match real time DTA data through the Virtual Gateway to their current student enrollment in order to directly certify them for free meals. Similarly, the Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) Act's expansion of categorical eligibility for free meals to foster children offered an opportunity for schools to provide greater meal accessibility. The Department's outreach team collaborated with nutrition directors throughout the Commonwealth to ensure that they were aware of this new legislation. Additionally, the Department connected with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enlist their support in promoting this information among their clients. Also, a joint notice was issued to school administrators.

In 2012, the Department contacted school nutrition staff, principals, and community agencies to emphasize the importance of promoting the availability of School Meal Application throughout the school year. Despite improvements in the direct certification process, many households still completed an SMA to receive free or reduced price meal benefits. Throughout the year, the Department's outreach coordinators followed up with schools to ensure that all children who were eligible for meal benefits were approved for the benefit. Specifically, the Department assisted districts that expressed interest in designing an outreach campaign to maximize SMA returns. Principals and SNDs in communities where 40 to 50 percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced price meals were contacted. As a result, 67 communities were contacted. In addition, the Department convened meetings in 15 districts to discuss potential outreach strategies. These districts were Barnstable, Boston, Bourne, Brockton, Cambridge, Hull, Mashpee, Medford, Ralph Mahar, Spencer-East Brookfield, Tisbury, Wareham, Weymouth, Winthrop, and Westfield.

The Department introduced a wide range of strategies and worked with school districts to develop a campaign suited to the need of each particular community. Notably, four communities that worked diligently with the outreach coordinators to increase free or reduced price meal eligibility to greater than 60 percent of student enrollment reached increased percentages. The communities were Westfield, Cambridge, Bourne and Medford. In an effort to communicate the importance of filling out SMAs to families, outreach materials were sent to 35 Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) contacts, 13 parent information centers, and 37 school-based health centers.

In addition to streamlining the access to meals, the Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act addressed national concerns regarding the nutritional quality of school meals. USDA's emphasis on whole grains, fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy and suggested limits on sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, and calories are consistent with other recommended nutrition guidelines. While these items provided invaluable health benefits to children, implementing them presented financial and logistical challenges for SNDs. To help overcome some of these challenges, the Department's outreach coordinators continued to work closely with SNDs through the Chefs in School Initiative. Project Bread's chef in residence, Kirk Conrad, worked with cafeteria staff in Boston, Lawrence, and Salem schools to improve nutrition and school meal palatability and provided training on cooking skills, recipe preparation, and meal

presentation. Similarly, the John Stalker Institute of Food and Nutrition (JSI) at Framingham University also conducted trainings for SNDs on healthy breakfast cuisine for children.

To further help educate school personnel about the meal pattern changes to school meals, the outreach coordinators consistently updated the 'Child Nutrition Reauthorization' page on the www.meals4kids.org website. Finally, the outreach team also encouraged school personnel around the Commonwealth to share recipes, marketing materials, nutrition education curriculums, and other helpful resources through the Sharing Library on www.meals4kids.org.

Partnership Building and Community Outreach

Massachusetts stands out as a leader in SBP and SFSP outreach practices and the Department was often contacted by many people and organizations throughout the country seeking outreach materials or outreach ideas. Over the course of the year, the Department was contacted by numerous people regarding a variety of topics such as volunteer or internship opportunities, requests for information on federal nutrition programs, questions regarding school meals, etc. The Department received over 60 general requests during the last school year. In addition to the targeted statewide outreach, the Department received 23 out-of-state requests spanning 16 states: New York, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Maine, Florida, Wisconsin, California, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Idaho and Georgia. The materials requested were School Breakfast Posters and the School Breakfast Calculator.

The Child Nutrition Outreach Program's website, www.meals4kids.org, proved to be a vital part of the Department's outreach and promotional effort. The website provided useful resources, materials, and information to SNDs, administrators, community agencies, and families. It was an important resource for our partners, and it served as a valuable tool in providing the most current, relevant, and pertinent information about school breakfast and summer meals to community members. However, the website's effectiveness was limited by its text heavy appearance and outdated design. To address these concerns, the website was revamped to make it user friendly. Launched in January 2012, the new site has a modern look and feel with simpler navigation, less text per page, more visuals, supplementary news about child nutrition programs, and updated information about school breakfast and summer meals. The website was operated by a content management system, and was easier for the outreach team to maintain, thereby ensuring that the content was continuously updated.

After redesigning the website and promoting it in January 2012, the number of unique visitors reached 932, representing a 34 percent increase compared to January of 2011. The average number of pages viewed each month after the redesign were consistently higher when compared to the prior year, suggesting that the redesign was more helpful and user friendly for sponsors.

The Department's outreach coordinators also worked to guarantee that all materials pertaining to the marketing of the SBP or SFSP were printed in the diverse languages frequently spoken by students and their parents in the Commonwealth. The distributed materials were printed in the following languages: Chinese, Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Expand School Based Partnerships

This year, the Department's outreach coordinators worked with school principals and SNDs in several SUSBP eligible schools interested in offering universally free meals. Outreach coordinators provided materials that described the benefits of offering universal free breakfast and recommended ways to successfully implement serving breakfast as part of the school day. In addition to discussing the logistics regarding universal free breakfast and Breakfast in the Classroom, the outreach coordinators also used the School Breakfast Calculator to assist communities interested in offering breakfast free of charge and/or introducing a new breakfast model to increase participation. The School Breakfast Calculator used information such as enrollment, breakfast participation, federal and state reimbursement rates, student payments, as well as expenditures on food, non-food supplies, and labor to forecast the financial implications of changing the way breakfast is served. The outreach coordinators promoted these financial forecasting services widely so that every district had access to this resource. As a result of this outreach, communities in the following districts decided to implement a SUSBP program or expressed interest in the School Breakfast Calculator: Medford, Salem, Randolph, Taunton, Wareham, and Webster.

A primary focus of the Department's outreach efforts work was to create easy to use tools for SNDs to help improve school breakfast and increase participation. The Department's outreach coordinators held a series of brainstorming sessions with SNDs and cafeteria staff to facilitate information sharing between them and identify additional ways that ESE could add value to their work. The brainstorming sessions resulted in the creation of an online Sharing Library, a one-stop resource for school nutrition staff to upload documents they created and to download documents that others created. The outreach team also added a comments section to the Sharing Library.

Outreach coordinators periodically featured SNDs on the www.meals4kids.org website who were either implementing best practices or introducing innovation into their school breakfast or summer food service programs. Starting a school breakfast program, implementing a new breakfast model, running a successful SMA Campaign, and starting a SFSP were all achievements that received recognition. The outreach coordinators highlighted these broad based school successes in the 'What's New' section of the www.meals4kids.org website with a short teaser blurb in the bi-monthly Fresh Focus eNewsletter to draw more people to an article. Over the course of the year, four individuals were highlighted for doing extraordinary work in their school community, including: Principal Becky Couet from Leddy Elementary School in Taunton, SND Sheila Parisien from Manchester-Essex, SND Maria Hall from Walpole, and Physical Education Specialist Andrew Fritz from the Bentley Elementary School in Salem.

In Taunton, Leddy Elementary School Principal Becky Couet was highlighted for her work starting a BIC at her school. Breakfast in the Classroom had a significant impact in the Leddy Elementary School. In October 2010, 42 percent of the students participated in school breakfast. As of October 2011, 85 percent of the students participated in school breakfast.

Manchester-Essex SND Sheila Parisien was highlighted for work in the district to offer healthy meal options. Ms. Parisien made positive and healthy changes to her school meals prior to the regulations making that a requirement for schools. She was able to make changes by soliciting student feedback regarding the meals that were offered.

Walpole SND Maria Hall was highlighted for her work to put into practice a new district-wide breakfast program, without being mandated. Ms. Hall's narrative provided other school nutrition directors with a success story about starting a completely new breakfast program. Ms. Hall's efforts demonstrated how perseverance could lead to receiving grant awards to improve a school breakfast program, even if a school had a low number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals.

Andrew Fritz, Physical Education Specialist at the Bentley Elementary School in Salem, was highlighted for his work in helping to increase breakfast participation through a special after-school video program, and school breakfast video contest. Mr. Fritz worked with a group of eight students after school for five weeks to teach them how to write a script and direct and shoot the video. His efforts energized the students about school breakfast. The video was featured on the CNOP YouTube channel and was shown at a special breakfast for the students who participated in the contest.

Throughout the 2012 fiscal year, outreach coordinators continued to promote the SBP and the SFSP through social media. Outreach coordinators maintained a Twitter account and a Facebook page to promote these programs and to post helpful information related to child nutrition. By the end of the fiscal year, the coordinators reported that there were 2,027 followers on Twitter and 140 different organizations as fans on Facebook. In efforts to expand the social media reach and to allow easy media sharing with contacts, the outreach coordinators created a YouTube channel. Since creating the YouTube channel, coordinators uploaded and shared videos from the School Breakfast Video Contest which resulted in over 618 views.

Part III: Summer Food Service Program Outreach Activities and Outcomes

The Department held the annual SFSP Kickoff event in February 2012. The kickoff was a chance to present current information and address regulatory changes to new and returning sponsors about the upcoming summer. The kickoff invitations were sent to 112 contacts including past sponsors, SND, and potential 2012 SFSP sponsors. Roughly 60 sponsors, vendors, and supporters of the SFSP along with representatives from USDA, Project Bread, and numerous presenters attended the event in Worcester at the College of the Holy Cross. The event focused on inventive outreach models that incentivize children and teens to participate in the SFSP in communities throughout Massachusetts. The Department discussed startup and expansion grant guidelines and deadlines, as well as the 2012 SFSP per meal reimbursement rates. USDA talked about the innovative SFSP Demonstration Projects, including one that the Department worked with in Barnstable County, and announced the new 2010 census data to determine area eligibility for SFSP sites. The outreach coordinators at CNOP offered information about grants and the

outreach programs, Project Bread's Text4Food Campaign, SFSP interns, SFSP incentives, the poster and photo contests, the new www.meals4kids.org website and the Sharing Library.

Outreach is an integral part of ensuring that the SFSP in Massachusetts is successful and participation is high throughout the state. To help promote the SFSP, the Department's outreach coordinators conducted outreach in a variety of ways. As part of CNOP's work to distribute SFSP information to local communities, the outreach coordinators distributed SFSP materials through several large mailings. SFSP site recruitment postcards were sent to 3,198 schools and agencies throughout the state in an effort to increase the number of sponsors/sites statewide. Additionally, the Department reached out to 3,019 principals and agencies throughout the state.

In school year 2011-2012, the outreach coordinators continued to connect prospective sites with existing SFSP sponsors. To target as many eligible SFSP sites as possible, the Department's outreach team consulted with the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) about the possibility of utilizing FRAC's mapping tool, updated with new census information, to identify new SFSP area eligibility. The request was approved and with the updated mapping tool, the outreach coordinators connected with current sponsors to inform them of the newly eligible areas in their community. The coordinators also contacted potential sites that were interested in participating in SFSP for the first time. As a result, 11 sites were aligned successfully with sponsors from the following communities: Lynn (2), Fall River, Holyoke, Boston (2), Peabody (2), Franklin, Taunton, and Somerville. Of the 11 sites, four were approved SFSP sites in the summer including: Holyoke Community College, Holyoke; College Ave United Methodist Church, Somerville; The Peabody Institute Library and The Center School, Peabody.

In order to increase the access to meals in the SFSP, the Department continued to engage potential sponsors in towns without programs, including Clinton, Dennis-Yarmouth, Warren and Winthrop. Many of these areas were newly eligible due to an increase in the number of children eligible for free or reduced price meals or the updated census data. The outreach efforts were successful as the Dennis-Yarmouth school district became a new SFSP sponsor.

The outreach coordinators recruited college students to assist sponsors with SFSP programming, food preparation, and administration. Sponsors were asked to fill out a quick form during the SFSP kickoff to determine their interest in working with an intern during the summer. As a result, student interns were placed with sponsors in Salem, Wareham, Gloucester and Peabody.

In August of 2012, the coordinators enlisted the help of a student intern from the Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition who worked collaboratively with the Somerville Public Schools' SFSP sponsor to re-energize the summer meals program. The intern utilized multiple promotional strategies including partnering with local businesses and community organizations. The SFSP promotion in Somerville was very successful and was marketed through bus stop and online advertisements, flyers, and the Somerville Public School's food service website. The intern also helped to standardize healthy recipes for the SFSP including dishes like Asian noodle salad, Italian pasta salad, and corn and bean salsa. The intern's work was shared with other sponsors including resources used, materials created, and lesson learned.

Due to a shelter housing shortage, Massachusetts had a number of hotels and motels where homeless families were living. In collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Department's outreach coordinators were given a

list of 48 motels and hotels in the Commonwealth that housed homeless families. Using this information, the outreach coordinators identified the sites that were area eligible to be an open SFSP site. Through extensive outreach to motels and hotels, new SFSP sites were approved in Malden, West Springfield, and Weymouth. The Department is committed to continue to work with sponsors, motel managers, and other community agencies that interact with homeless families to make an effort to expand the SFSP to additional motels and hotels.

In the summer of 2011, the Department collaborated with the Barnstable sponsor, the Cape Cod YMCA, to submit a SFSP Home Delivered Meals Demonstration Project (HDM). In the summer of 2012, the program operated in its second year of the grant. The Department worked with the Barnstable Schools food service department to send letters to families notifying them of the project and encouraging them to call a coordinator for eligibility screening. In addition to the school based outreach, the outreach coordinators utilized broad based outreach strategies to notify families of this unique opportunity. The project was promoted to the church community through the Cape Cod Council of Churches; advertised in Barnstable County Human Services Department's newsletter; and provided flyers and outreach materials to other community organizations and agencies in Barnstable.

As part of the Home Delivered Meals program, roughly 150 income eligible children in the Mashpee, Bourne and Hyannis area received breakfast and lunch seven days a week throughout the entire summer vacation. There were a significant number of low-income families who worked in the service industries during the summer months and whose children were eligible for free or reduced price school meals. While we know that these children received nutritious meals during the school year, we recognized that accessing meals during the summer months was much more difficult for these families. There were two delivery routes, route one had a Monday, Wednesday and Friday delivery, and route two meals were delivered on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The HDM delivery bags were filled with healthy breakfasts and lunches that consisted of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and skim milk, that complied with the USDA SFSP meal pattern. The YMCA started the delivery of meals on the evening of the last day of school, ensuring that each child started the first day of summer vacation with a healthy breakfast and lunch. The meal delivery program ran throughout the last day of summer vacation, and was able to provide meals to 200 children at the peak of participation. Every child that was enrolled in the program received a breakfast and lunch every day throughout the summer of 2012. With the addition of weekend meals, this program filled the gap when local schools were closed to assure that hunger insecurity was alleviated for all participating children.

The Department's outreach coordinators worked with Project Bread's Chefs in Schools program to create opportunities for the chefs to work with local SFSP sponsors (or vendors) and their staff to teach them how to create healthy and nutritious, children-approved meals using on hand products. CNOP organized week-long visits for three Project Bread chefs to work with the following SFSP communities: Adam/Cheshire, Barnstable, Gloucester, Lowell, Methuen, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Salem, Stoughton, and Waltham.

To help address low SFSP participation among teens and preteens, the Department and Project Bread created the Text4Food Campaign in Spring of FY11. To help advertise this campaign in the summer of 2012, English and Spanish billboards and bus stop ads with information on SFSP meals were located in the following Boston Neighborhoods: Mattapan, Dorchester, Roxbury, and East Boston. Children were instructed to text 617-863-MEAL for more information. After

determining the person's neighborhood, the outreach coordinators responded via text with information about the closest meal sites. Throughout the summer, CNOP received and replied to 336 text messages regarding the location of SFSP sites.

The Text4Food Campaign gained national recognition from USDA. The East Boston YMCA was recognized by USDA for their efforts to support programming for teens, including the texting outreach campaign. The Department and the outreach team at CNOP worked together with the East Boston YMCA to complete and submit an application outlining their work to reach teens in the SFSP. The YMCA's program was one of four contest finalist from over 100 national submissions to the USDA's *Food, Fun & Sun: SFSP Story and Photo Contest*.

The work that the Department did to establish Summer Food Service Program sites, with the support of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was fruitful. Table 3 below, illustrates the steady increase in the number of sites since 2008. There were 760 sites in FY08 and 921 sites in FY12.

Table 3: Number of Participating Summer Food Service Program Sites from Fiscal Years 08 to 12⁵

Fiscal Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of Sites	760	818	822	841	921

Part IV: Nutrition Outreach Activities and Outcomes

In order to connect local farmers with SFSP sponsors to increase the availability of fresh produce, the Department promoted the use of locally grown foods (LGF) in schools as well as summer meals. The produce purchased by schools was commonly fruits and vegetables: apples, pears, peaches, squash (summer and winter), carrots, potatoes, cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers and sweet corn. The Department's outreach staff continued to work with communities throughout the state to provide them with the necessary information regarding locally grown foods. Their efforts and others are consistent with the Massachusetts Legislature's 2010 bill that was passed to support the Mass Farm to School Project, a resource from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR). The bill includes a provision for preferential purchasing of products grown in Massachusetts and instructs MDAR to collect data to facilitate the process of local farms and public schools doing business together.

In efforts to support sponsors interested in serving LGF over the summer, the Department's Child Nutrition Outreach Program offered an incentive grant for communities new to using LGF. In the summer of 2012, two communities reported that working with a local farm was a new experience. YMCA of Cape Cod, (working with Cape Cod Organic Farm) incorporated lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, squash, cucumbers, peaches, strawberries, and blueberries into their menu and Salem Public Schools, (working with Moraine Farm in Beverly) incorporated herbs, zucchini,

⁵ Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Nutrition, Health, and Safety Programs, 2012

watermelons, tomatoes, cucumbers, and apples into their menu. The outreach coordinators continued to work closely with Mass Farm to School to connect interested school and summer contacts with appropriate local farmers.

Table 4 below shows that there was an increase in federal reimbursement for the summer Food Service Program for FY12, in comparison with FY11, by 6.6 percent. The total reimbursement in FY12 was \$7,054,703 while the total in FY11 was \$6,616,258. In addition, the reimbursement has steadily increased over the past five years as the participation by children has increased as described previously.

Table 4: Federal Reimbursement for Summer Food Service Programs from Fiscal Years 08 to 12⁶

Fiscal Year	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Federal	\$5,924,438	\$6,031,045	\$6,426,928	\$6,616,258	\$7,054,703

Part V: Conclusion

During school year 2012, under the direction of the Department's Office for Nutrition, Health and Safety Programs, the child nutrition outreach program coordinators at Project Bread worked diligently and tirelessly with school district staff and community organizations to expand and enhance the effectiveness of current programs and introduced new campaign strategies and resources to address childhood hunger in Massachusetts. In addition to recognizing the benefits of the school breakfast and summer food service program as nutritional support for families in the Commonwealth, the Department's continued monitoring of economic trends and meal eligibility levels provided it with the opportunity to forecast need in all cities and towns. Despite the difficult economic status in many communities that challenged program sponsorship, collaborative activities with the coordination of resources sustained program participation.

The Department increased the campaigns to inform schools, students, and parents about the State Universal School Breakfast Program initiative and Summer Food Service Program opportunities. The Department solicited human resources that were eager and capable of testing innovative ways of preparing and presenting meals that were receptive by many students. These resources provided districts with tools to improve, promote, and strengthen breakfast programs.

The Department offered program support in specific areas of management and operations that encompass budgets, menu offerings, and nutritional content. Increased student input and participation in the promotion of the breakfast programs addressed misconceptions on food quality and availability. The opportunities for programs to share their successful models and to discuss alternative ways to reach all eligible children were improved and strengthened in all regions of the Commonwealth. The Department acknowledged that there will be many challenges for the School Breakfast Program, including the new meal pattern required by federal directive, which will be phased over three years and will require additional supports.

⁶Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Nutrition, Health, and Safety Programs, 2012

The connection between community-based activities and the comprehensive operation of summer sites largely determined the success of summer sites. Additional federal resources were triggered by streamlined program reimbursement. Incorporating marketing, food presentation, locally grown produce, and enhanced nutrient standards, improved overall food service operation and encouraged sustained participation.

Nutrition education information and knowledge were integrated into the summer day. The provision of grant funds to hire outreach coordinators for local programs provided an increase in sites, and targeted marketing campaigns. It has also expanded community involvement in the Summer Food Service Program. The availability of additional grant opportunities from various entities for these programs allowed for the development of more effective strategies to improve nutrition programs, outreach, and accessibility. The Commonwealth's support of these programs contributed greatly to the ability to reach and serve hungry children across the state in this increasingly strained economic climate.